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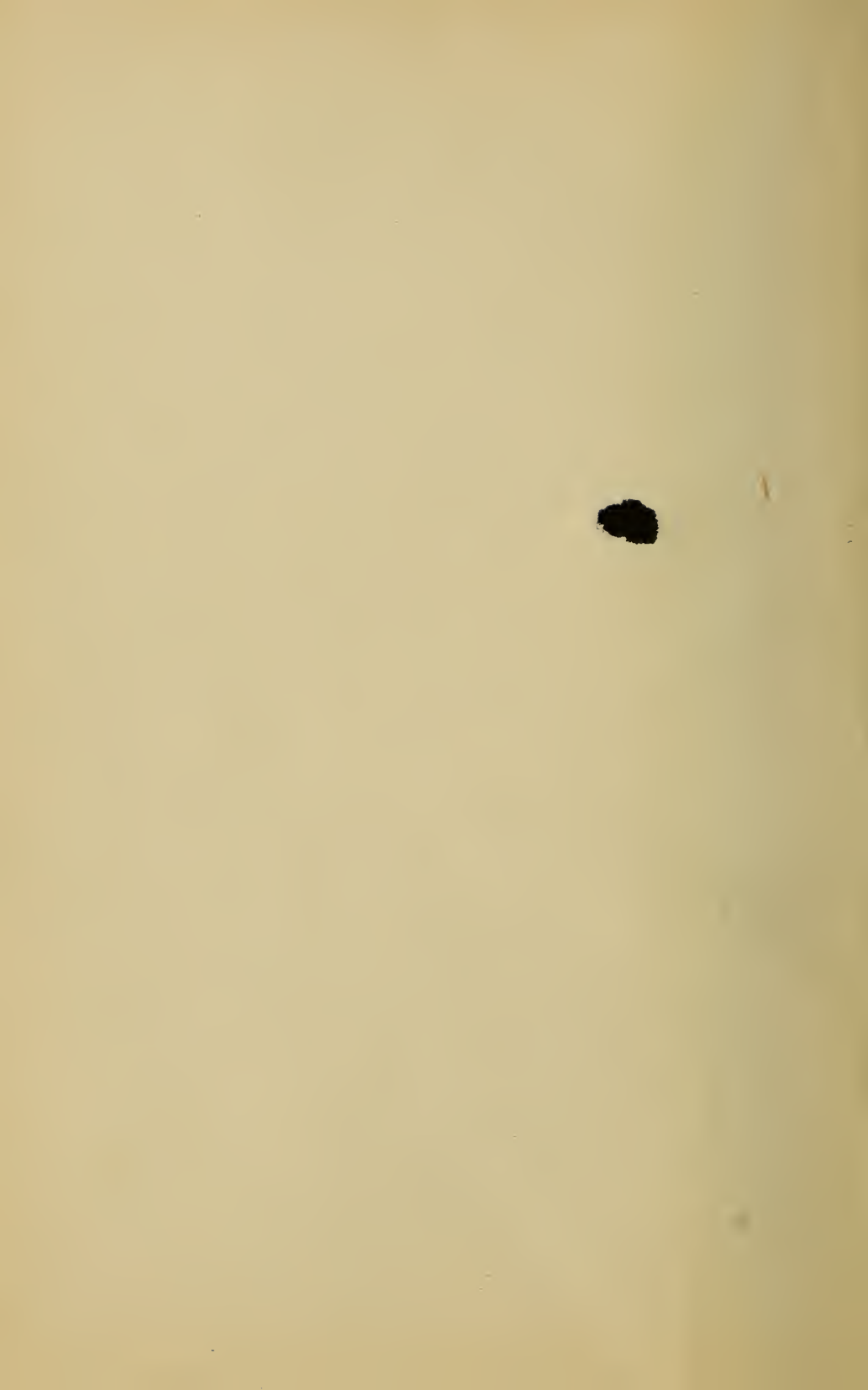
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.











# HINTS ON BIBLE STUDY.

BY

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE.

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As Sir Walter Scott lay on a couch in his library, looking out upon the Tweed, and wondering how many hours would elapse before life's lamp would go out, he asked a friend to read to him. "What book would you like?" said Lockhart, as he looked at the 20,000 beautiful volumes carefully arranged round the walls. "Need you ask?" said Sir Walter; "*there is but one.*" And so the Bible was brought, and the sick man was comforted by the sweet sayings of the Man of Nazareth.

The great author was right. There is but one Book that can at once teach the little child and guide the great statesman; that can lift whole nations out of their savagery, strike the manacles from the slave, and pour forth a flood of human happiness upon the world. This Book kills cowardice and purifies ambition. It tears the mask from the scoundrel's voluptuous face and reveals his villainy. It makes men socially sweet and morally clean,

and guides them through this perilous and tumultuous life right into the safety of heaven's own harbour.

"But one Book"—and yet it is the very Book which we most of all neglect. No book is treated so badly as the Bible. We buy a novel—often full of sickly sentimentality or sanguinary sensationalism—and, beginning with the title-page, we go carefully through the volume, reading even preface and dedication, and hardly missing the advertisements. But the grand old Bible—God's eternal Book—is taken up at uncertain intervals, and some familiar passage is merely scanned in the most careless and slipshod style. Who ever thinks of beginning at the first chapter of Genesis and reading steadily through to Revelation, putting all prejudice on one side, and trying to find out the main purpose, the central meaning, the vital message, of the Book? And yet that is the way to read the Bible. "I believe it would startle and move any one," says Mr. R. L. Stevenson, referring to the Gospel of St. Matthew, "if they could make a certain effort of imagination, and read it freshly like a book, not droningly and dully like a portion of the Bible." Why not try the experiment?

In sending forth this volume we would specially urge upon the *young* the duty as well as the delight



## EDITOR'S PREFACE.



of systematic Bible-study. Some parts of God's great Book they may scarcely understand, for there are passages in the Bible which can only be read through tears. In the brightness and buoyancy of youth men often pass them over and revel in the thrilling biographies and soul-stirring stories—the sound of which is like the tramp of armed men—all movement and excitement. But life is hard, and we soon come to rough roads and weary ways. When the day is all darkness and the night all pain, “there is but one Book”—the Book which contains the wondrous message of the great love of God. “Read your Bible,” said Mr. Ruskin, in addressing the students at Oxford, “making it the first morning business of your life to understand some portion of it clearly, and your daily business to obey it in all that you do understand. To my early knowledge of the Bible I owe the best part of my taste in literature, and the most precious, and, on the whole, the one essential part of my education.”

F. A. A.



# HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE.

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## I.

BY DR. CLIFFORD, M.A.

I. **ALTHOUGH** nothing is more obvious, yet I must insist at the outset on the urgent necessity for a definite recognition of the fact that the Bible *demand*s, as well as deserves and rewards, intelligent and strenuous study. Its main teachings are so luminous, and its language is so familiar through long use, that we forget that every page offers precious materials to earnest search, and golden gains to those who will patiently and wisely toil. Ruskin is not a whit too severe when he says in his "Ethics of the Dust:" "The way the common people read their Bibles is just like the way the old monks thought hedgehogs ate grapes. They rolled themselves (it was said) over and over where the grapes lay on the ground. What first



stuck to their spines they carried off and ate. So your hedgehoggy readers roll themselves over and over their Bibles, and declare whatever sticks to their spines is Scripture, and that nothing else is." "But," he adds, "you can only get the skins of the texts that way; if you want their juice you must press them in cluster." We must "*strive* to enter in by the narrow door" of the Kingdom of Revelation, for many think to dream their way therein, and are not able. The Bible will not give its best treasures to indolence, or even to transparent sincerity and intense devotion, indispensable as they are. Study is requisite—clear-sighted, methodical, scientific study—if we are resolved to know what is and what is not the *real word* God has spoken to men. There is no "royal road" to the knowledge of the Word. We must "search the Scriptures" if we are bent on using its opulent ideas and divine inspiration in building up a manly life. Knowledge gained from the great Christian tradition, the current talk of the Churches and of the press, has its service, but it must never be permitted to take the place of the sifted, methodised, and personally tested acquisitions each man should make for himself by diligent and pains-taking study. The goodly pearls are to be had if we are willing to pay for them.



2. The *first* thing needful to the man resolved to study the Bible aright is to obtain from the best means at his disposal the *strict, exact, and full meaning* of the words employed by the sacred writer, free from all personal colouring and theological bias, and stated with scrupulous fidelity to grammar and lexicon, to custom and history, to the ascertained mood and purpose of the writer, and to the conditions and aspirations of the recipients of his message. This is fundamental. Reverence for the wonderful Book ought to create a hallowed dread of adding to or taking away from the Spirit-filled contents of the words of Scripture; and yet it is notorious that no book has suffered more from the uncritical and irrational treatment it has received from its readers and admirers. That typical expositor, Prof. Cheyne, writes: "The better a reader understands the historical sense, the more likely he is to find out the best spiritual sense." It is the Biblical *idea* that is fruitful and reproductive. In it is life. No pains therefore may be spared to make sure that we have it. We owe at once to the book and to ourselves all that is necessary to get, at any cost, the exact meaning of the word of God.

3. Therefore, speaking broadly but still accurately, we must study the contents of the Bible in

the same way as we do those of any other book, say Milton's "Paradise Lost," or Tyndall on "Heat," or Green's "History of the English People," with (a) the same resolute detachment of mind; (b) the same readiness to defer to rightful authority; (c) the same use of the best tools which can be had; (d) the same strong sympathy with the subject on which the writers treat, the spirit they breathe and the purpose they seek to realise. "Men spake, or wrote the 'Scriptures,' as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" but they were *men*, and their words can only be accurately explained and fully understood as the ordinary, literary, textual and critical methods of study are faithfully applied. For us the Revelation is in an English "earthen vessel," and we must derive the contents of the vessel by the same processes we use with Milton's poems, Tyndall's science, or Green's story of our ancestors.

4. I do not know anything more difficult or more urgent in Biblical study than perfect "detachment of mind," a going directly to the Book itself, and listening with purged ear and absolutely unprejudiced spirit to its message. I have found that ninety per cent. of the difficulties of young men with the Bible are not due to the Bible at all, but to the theories of men about its composition or inspiration, its theology or interpretation. As the

true and progressive artist goes straight to a landscape and sees Nature for himself; as the scientist investigates the facts, and materials, and processes of Nature at first hand; so it is the direct face-to-face vision of the Book that is revealing. Suffer the Scriptures to tell their own tale to the spirit sincerely in quest of the truth concerning God and the soul, and you will not be long before you feel and confess their divine inspiration.

5. Going thus with cleansed vision to the Book itself, we must next welcome every competent guide in fixing and expressing the sense of its contents. The *Revised Version* of our English Bible should be preferred and its marginal readings consulted; for they often contain better renderings of the original text, and disclose the writer's idea in its greater fulness and beauty. But we must not suffer marginal references and concordance lists to hide the differences of meaning through which a word has passed in its long history, or in which it has been used by various authors. Important as the letter is, the unity of the Bible is not of the letter but of the spirit.

I ought to add that the volumes forming the "Cambridge Bible for Colleges and Schools" are at once one of the cheapest and most competent guides in this study.

6. My experience and observation warrant the assertion that special advantage will be found in taking a gospel such as Mark's, or an epistle such as that of James, or a section of an epistle such as that on practical life and service beginning with the 12th chapter of the Romans, or a limited period of Hebrew history like the Exile, and concentrating attention upon it, until its text is understood, its leading ideas grasped, and its spirit possessed. A little of the Bible well understood and thoroughly mastered will go further and help more than a cursory knowledge of larger portions of it. It adds to the interest of the pursuit, and confers such a command as enables the reader afterwards to engage in the study of other portions with increased success. For the Bible is a library, a collection of the masterpieces of the literature of a people, packed into the smallest compass, but belonging to widely separated periods, and comprising nearly all forms of literature, and therefore is best examined in restricted but related portions, aided by the "introductions" written by competent men. In this way we shall see the progress of revelation from the elementary and imperfect conceptions of God and of morality in the Old Testament to the full and perfect teaching of Christ Jesus in the Gospels.



7. Let me add in a brief closing word the eternal law that a definite spiritual aim and a strong sympathy with spiritual ideals are supremely necessary for the successful study of the Word of God. We must go to the Bible to learn how to live the best life; to see God in Christ reconciling us to Himself, to enjoy Him and to serve Him, in serving Man, His child; and therefore we must read humbly and devoutly as well as reflectively. Our prayer must be: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law."

## II.

By THE REV. C. H. WALLER, M.A.,

*Principal of St. John's Hall, Highbury.*

SEVERAL times during the last few years I have heard a saying repeated, which, I believe, originally came from the lips of the Rev. Charles Simeon, that *justification comes by faith, but knowledge of the Bible comes by works*. This saying may have more than one interpretation. I cannot say how much Mr. Simeon meant by it, but I see two or three meanings.

The first is, that the Bible is a book that cannot be known without study. No book that is worth much can be. And the study of books is pretty nearly the same thing always—first textual, then topical. If a book *can* be learned by heart, unquestionably that is the best way of knowing it. It has advantages which cannot be surpassed. I have heard a saying of one of our English kings—George III., if I am not mistaken—that no man knew the laws of England; but the difference

between a good lawyer and a bad lawyer was this, that a good lawyer knew where to look for the law on any given question, and a bad lawyer did not. So with the Bible; a good Bible-student knows where to look for what the Bible says on any subject, a bad student does not. But a man who had learned the whole Scripture, or any one book of the Scripture, by heart, *would know without looking*. And a book of Scripture is always a sample of the whole. Before now, when I have had to pass an examination on a special book of the New Testament, and was pressed for time, so that I could not work up the interpretation with the usual helps, I have learned the text of the book by heart, and so gone in for the examination. This is better than having the book itself before one. With the text before you, you must still turn over the pages and pick out references. With the text in your memory, the mind does that for itself.

But I do not say "Learn the Bible" for the sake of examination only. It is but few of us who are examined in the Bible as students. There is another examination, however, that is carried on through all our waking hours—an examination by the world, the flesh, and the devil, to see whether we know the Word of Truth sufficiently not to be deceived by Satan's lies. There is no concordance

to temptations; if there were, it would not be a pocket volume. "The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," must be at hand always. *That portion of the Bible which we know by heart measures the length and breadth of our sword.* The rest is in the arsenal.

I cannot but recall the dying words of a dear old college friend with whom I had sometimes studied the Scripture. To his brothers and sisters assembled round his death-bed he said, "I don't say read the Bible, but *learn it, learn it!*" Nothing else will suffice. And, even so, we cannot dispense with the daily reading of the Bible.

"Concerning things slowly learnt," it has been well said, that "when you have admitted them to be true and certain, you put them into your mind to keep (so to speak), and hardly a day has passed when a soft, quiet hand seems to begin to crumble them down, and to wear them away to nothing."

It is so with all Divine things written on the heart of fallen man. There is an enemy for ever trying to rub them out, and write his own laws (or lawlessness) in their stead. Day by day we need to take the truth that remains in our hearts to the Great Writer, and to the Book of the Law of God, that He may clean the inscription and deepen the impression He has begun to make. At this moment



I have an illustration of this fact before me that makes my heart ache. Men, from whom one expected better things, are talking and writing of our Lord's human nature, as though it made Him incapable of bearing any certain testimony to things Divine. Have they never read the fourth Gospel? I ask myself. I know they have. How is it, then, that it escapes their memory that "He whom God hath sent speaketh *the words of God?*" They talk of His words respecting the prophet Jonah, for instance, as though He only used the story for an illustration, bearing no testimony to it as a fact. Do they forget that He said, "*The men at Nineveh shall rise in the judgment with the men of this generation, and shall condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold a greater than Jonah is here?*" How *can* the story of Jonah be a fiction if these words are true? That a man who knows the Gospels, and believes in our Lord Jesus Christ, should take that saying to be the utterance of one who simply *believed the Old Testament by reason of His limited knowledge*, is little short of temporary insanity. If He spoke as an ordinary man, how did He know what would happen on the Day of Judgment? If He was more than man, how could He be mistaken on the question whether the story of Jonah was true?

If He was God, how could He speak of it as true, knowing it to be false?

That able and generally believing men should commit themselves to such theories as this is an illustration of the way in which illusions can fasten upon the mind when the exact text of Scripture is not before it. "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly," if it stood by itself, *might* refer (conceivably) to a Jonah in history, or to a Jonah in fiction. The words previously cited could not possibly be so taken. They are consistent with one supposition only, that the story of Jonah's preaching to the Ninevites is *true*.

I began with the statement that "knowledge of the Bible comes by *works*." The illustration just given helps us to its second meaning. It is not simply by study, in the sense of *intellectual* labour at the text of Scripture, that we come to know it. A mathematician does not require to read a proposition of Euclid carefully every morning and evening for fear he should forget that two right lines cannot enclose a space; but there appears to be no limit to the absurdities which divines who only study Scripture intellectually can put forth and maintain. A man may be a learned critical commentator, and yet maintain that our Lord was less competent to distinguish fact from fiction than

the learned critic is himself. How can these things be? Daily reading of the Scripture as God's message to our hearts is necessary in order to maintain our faith in it as true.

*Knowledge of the Bible comes by works*, in more senses than one. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent" (John vi. 29). And again, "If ye believed Moses, ye would believe Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words" (John v. 47). There can be no profitable knowledge of the Bible unless we receive it as *true*. Knowledge of that which is not true is *error* and *mistake*.

Nor must we pick and choose. If the Bible is partly true and partly false, who is to draw the distinction? Scholars differ. What was true with them thirty years ago they give up and alter now. What is true now, by the same rule may be false thirty years hence. Who is to decide? Not so the Bible. "The glory of man is the flower of grass; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever." Some will say the Word of the Lord is Christ, not the Bible. I believe it is both. But take your choice. Let Christ be the Word of the Lord, and believe Him; believe all He said, as it is set down in the

New Testament, and you will find that it comes to the same thing. *He believed all the Scripture.* Those who wish to get rid of the Old Testament, or to reconstruct portions of it, find this fact of our Lord's belief and acceptance of it so much in their way, that they are constrained to deny His authority, and to say that He only spoke and believed with the men of His own time. But where did He say so? You may search the Gospels from end to end and you will never find Him saying that He *believed the Scriptures.* He *knew*, and had no need to believe. "He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke xxiv. 27). He knew "how all things were accomplished, that the Scripture might be perfected" (John xix. 28). "He opened the understanding (literally 'expanded the mind') of His disciples, to understand the Scriptures" (Luke xxiv. 45). If we believe Him, we cannot but believe the Scriptures. Those who believe not Moses must go on to deny Christ. The truth of Scripture in this respect is wonderful. Until recently we have seen men professing to doubt Moses and believe Christ. Now those who believe not Moses are beginning to deny the perfect knowledge of our Lord.

No profitable knowledge of the Holy Scripture will ever come without belief in the Scripture.

And belief in the Scripture means the most absolute reliance upon Him who "spake by the Prophets." "The Holy Ghost saith," what is written (Acts i. 16; Heb. iii. 7; ix. 8; x. 15-17). "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. xix. 10). "I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me" (John xvii. 8). Thus the words of Scripture are the utterances of the Blessed Trinity—of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. *How* they are so is a mystery. I receive the Scripture as God's word written, not because I understand how it was inspired, but because it comes to me from the prophets and apostles with that claim. Let me here state in a few lines of simple dialogue exactly what I mean, and how the Church comes into the question. There is endless confusion on the subject.

*What is that book in your hand?* "The Bible."

*What do you mean by the Bible?* "God's written word."

*How do you know it is God's written word?* "My mother told me so" (*i.e.*, the Church of Christ, Articles xx., vi., xxi.).

*How did she know?* "She had it from the prophets and apostles of Christ, *who delivered it to the Church as God's word in their own lifetime.* She has kept it since, and knows it is what they gave to her."



*How did she distinguish prophets and apostles from other men?* "They proved themselves to be God's messengers, because their words came to pass (Deut. xviii. 21, 22). Some of them did miracles, but *all* things that they spoke in the name of God came true (John x. 41, 42)."

*Were the words of the prophets always to be taken as God's word?* "Yes, when they spoke in His name (Deut. xviii. 18, 19)."

These questions and answers contain a simple statement of the whole position. The inspiration of the writers of Scripture is not described, and cannot be. The authority of the Scripture is clear. And the authority of the Church is a perfectly distinct thing; the authority of a *witness* and *keeper* of *Holy Writ*, and no more. *A witness* that these books, and no others, were delivered as the Scriptures. *A keeper* who has preserved the exact books so delivered.

If the question of various readings and different translations is raised, it does not really affect the authority of the Bible. A translation, in so far as it *truly* represents the original, has the authority of the original. A various reading only raises the question what the text of the book is in that place. The authority of the text, where you can read it **with certainty**, is not affected by the fact that you

cannot read it in some other part. Practically, the multitude of variations is a safeguard. The great bulk of the sacred text has no variations at all, and may be taken as absolutely correct. I speak more especially of the New Testament. The whole of the vowels of the Old Testament are an addition to the written text. They represent a traditional reading supported by ancient versions. But we cannot forget that this traditional reading was given to us by a Church which had not received Jesus as the Christ, and He is the Alpha and the Omega of God's written word. That is, He is its true vocaliser. He makes the meaning and fulness of the whole book. When His ancient people receive Him as the Messiah of Scripture, it will be "as life from the dead." That there are treasures in the Old Testament which will then come to light, of which we have hardly any conception, I have not the slightest doubt.

Have I strayed from the subject of Bible study? I ask pardon if I have done so; but Bible study requires enthusiasm, and nothing damps enthusiasm like any element of uncertainty or unbelief. I know, only too well, that the most excellent methods and principles will never make a Bible student of any one who does not absolutely prostrate his intellect before the Book. "Thou hast hid these

things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." There is enough in the Bible to exhaust the finest intellect and the longest life, if the student is a believer; and at the end he will depart hence with this, among other hopes, set before him: "I shall understand it all when I get there. But if it is God's Word, it will take eternity to understand it fully, so that I shall never want food for thought."

Let me just name the two men that stand out in my recollection as my helpers to Bible study. Both are now in Paradise. One I saw often; the other I only know from books. Some day I hope to see both of them, and to sit down with them at the feet of Him who has given us His Word.

The first person who discovered to me the fact that the Bible is an *interesting* book, as well as a good book, was the late Dean Burgon. I have written and said so much about him elsewhere that I must not repeat it here. But I will offer every one an introduction to his method of study. There is a little book of his, called "The Servants of Scripture," published by the Christian Knowledge Society (I think, at eighteenpence). Any one who will get that, and not simply read it, but try and work out each of the stories for himself from the Bible, so as to verify Dean Burgon's results, will certainly learn

something of his method by the time he has finished. Then let him apply the same method to all the Scripture *characters*, good and bad. There will be a profitable study. When he has finished that, he will know what to do next.

The other name I have to mention is that of Dr. John Duncan, whose life was written by Dr. David Brown. A second volume, containing "Sermons and Table Services," came from the same pen. "Recollections," by Moody Stuart, and Knight's *Colloquia Peripatetica*, complete the four volumes by which I know John Duncan. I suppose he was one of the first linguists, philosophers, theologians, and missionaries of this century. Dr. Edersheim and Dr. Saphir will, I am sure, forgive me for saying that both of them are, more or less directly, the spiritual children of Dr. Duncan's missionary work among the Jews in Hungary, about the time of the disruption of the Established Presbyterian Church of Scotland, more than forty years ago.

Dr. Duncan was an intense student of Scripture and an intense believer in it. And he had travelled the whole round of belief and unbelief, from Secession, through Material Atheism and Deism, back to Free Church Christianity in its brightest days. The recollections that others have preserved of his sayings formed an epoch in my life, when I first met with

them. He taught me that it is impossible to pick and choose in dealing with Holy Scripture. The most absolute faith is also the most defensible position. The man who will not desert his post can never be driven from it, if his position is that of belief in the Scripture. And *it is the believers who are the students*, after all.

It was Dr. Duncan who said he was "conscious of an *air* that comes from the Word of God. *It was air to breathe*," too. Not fog to mystify, learning to puzzle, criticism to perplex. No; but air to breathe in this dark world, amidst the mists of error and the coldness of unbelief. The atmosphere of doubt is benumbing and deadening. The atmosphere of faith is bracing and strengthening. In company with Dean Burgon and Dr. Duncan, I could always find this atmosphere. No doubt they have left successors behind them. There are the "seven thousand" I am sure. But *I* cannot see them. Sometimes I am tempted to say, "I, even I only, am left." I cannot really be so. But God helping me, *I mean to stay, if I am*.



### III.

By PROFESSOR ELMSLIE, D.D.

THE effective use of a tool rests on the workman's knowledge of its nature, limitations, and design. The profitable working of an industry depends on the manufacturer's accurate comprehension of the character and capabilities of his raw material. To study the Bible aright, the first requisite is a correct notion of what the Bible is.

We believe that God has revealed Himself to men. To the Scriptures we go to make acquaintance with that revelation. But the Bible is not itself the revelation : it is simply the record of the revelation. God has made Himself known not by dictating descriptions of His character, nor verbal dogmas about His nature and will. He came among men, acted in their lives, dealt with them personally in nature and in grace. Not in speech, but in life ; not in hearsay, but in experience ; not in word, but in deed, they got to know God. And what they saw, heard, handled of the

word of life, they have written, that we might have fellowship with them in their fellowship with God. Thus the Bible enshrines no cold, mechanical body of teaching, but a tremendously real experience of humanity, and an indestructible acquisition of the spiritual travail of our race.

While it is true that God has left no people without a witness of Himself, it is equally certain that the people of the Bible have attained to an unapproached grandeur of divine knowledge. This attainment may be explained partly by racial gifts or historical influences, but cannot be accounted for except by a unique directness of revealing action among them. God manifested Himself in supernatural fashion, and men's spirits were inspired to clearly discern and interpret the divine action. So the Historical Books of the Old Testament tell us how God dwelt among His chosen people, and dealt with them in judgment and in mercy, while the Gospels picture for us the perfect incarnation in Jesus Christ of the whole heart and mind and will of God for the world's redemption. The Prophecies preserve for us the impassioned battlings of men of God for God's kingdom on earth, as the Acts of the Apostles chronicle the foundation and upbuilding of the Church. The Psalms and the Epistles show us the response of human hearts to the converse of God

with them, and the assimilation in thought and life of the contents of faith and hope and love.

In its origin, therefore, the Bible is on one side all divine, on another all human. And these are not separate and apart, as if some of it were of God and some of man. The natural and the supernatural are in and in each other, as in Jesus we find God and man absolutely united in one Person. Moreover, in both cases, the divine is reached by us, not as we attenuate the natural, but just in proportion as we accept it in its perfect humanness. The gift of God in the incarnation has often been neutralised by good men, in zeal for our Lord's divinity, throwing His humanity into the background. The same mistake is made in dealing with Scripture. If only we do in very deed, when we read the Bible, come into the presence of God, we cannot too much realise the absolutely real, natural, and human embodiment of the divine revelation enshrined in it.

The knowledge of God mirrored in Scripture was a living acquisition. It was not imparted from outside to men's intellects in words, but was fabricated with pain and toil in men's souls through actual contact with the living God. No living thing leaps into complete existence at a bound. It has a growth, a progress, a development from immaturity

to maturity. "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." The Bible exhibits a real growth in men's knowledge of God through the centuries of revelation. Hence we shall be not shocked, but prepared to find partial conceptions of God's being and nature, defective apprehension of His spirit, and imperfect moral conditions in the Old Testament. It will not stagger but confirm our faith to recognise among such rude and ignorant scholars the presence and patient teaching of a Divine heart, that takes them as they are, leads them on slowly but surely to better things, and proves its power and Divineness by this, that while the gods of heathen religions have ever been dragged down to their worshippers' level, the God of revelation has, on the contrary, lifted His stiffnecked and wayward children ever upward and nearer to Himself.

This natural, organic development of revelation furnishes many indispensable keys to the practical use of the Bible. For one thing, it is clear that we must not go to any part of the Bible and tear a text out regardless of its setting, and drag it neck and heels to give evidence in support of some pet doctrine—dealing with the Bible, to use Luther's graphic simile, "like a sow with a bag of oats." The use and value of anything in Scripture depend

altogether on its place, origin, and circumstances. Many things in the Old Testament have been by Christ cancelled, modified, or superseded. Scripture does not consist of dogmatic declarations of absolute truth, not even of balanced statements, such as we have in a catechism or creed. Everything is not of equal authority. In the words of Baxter, "I must tell you a truth, which ignorant Christians fear to confess: the Scripture is like a man's body, where some parts are for the preservation of the rest: so the sense is the soul of the Scripture, the letter is but the body." The substance of the revelation is ethical and spiritual. Physical truth, science, philosophy, are not to be looked for in the Bible. What it contains is a message from God's heart to our heart. To miss that and seek these were to turn the children's bread into a stone. The God revealed in the Bible is the real God; not an abstract conception of theology, but the living God; the God with whom we have to do daily in our bodily, mental, moral, and spiritual life. What the Bible discloses to us is His actual dealing with us in our actual life, not a God in some non-secular sphere, clean away and apart from our ordinary existence. The supernatural action of God depicted in the Bible is but His ordinary action made visible and articulate in the lives and hearts



of ordinary men—ignorant, erring, aspiring, like ourselves.

Study of the Bible has for its aim, then, to know God, as He is in actual life and experience. The book is as big as the world, and as strangely and wonderfully mingled in its contents. It is a mirror of human nature of unequalled truthfulness, devoid of exaggeration—optimistic or pessimistic. For success in business, the first essential is a just and adequate knowledge of human nature. As a textbook, nothing can compare with the Bible. Contrariwise, there is no commentary to the Bible that can compete with a deep knowledge of one's own heart and the actual lives of men. Read the Bible, seeking echoes in your memory, and you will wonder how it will begin to throb with reality and glow with light. This alone will carry you through much of Scripture adequately, but for other portions an acquaintance with their historical origin is requisite; for example, the Prophecies. What a difference such knowledge makes, any one may prove by reading Mr. George Smith's "*Isaiah*," a book that stirs heart and intellect, and reveals a grandeur of power and meaning in the Prophecies that will surprise and delight the reader. Would we had a host of such works on both Old and New Testaments! But external aids can never replace

personal toil, and thought, and interpretation. **Life** gives up its best in all things only to patient, loving labour. Skim over the pages of Scripture, and **you** inhale an evanescent scent of hidden sweetness. **It** is the busy, lingering bee, that forces its way **down** into the deep chalice of the flower blooms, that carries the golden honey home, and gathers, against the dark days that must come, a rich store of comfort, strength, and sustenance—

“The heart’s sweet Scripture, to be read at night  
When weary, and at morning when afraid.”

## IV.

By THE REV. H. C. G. MOULE, M.A.,

*Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge.*

I AM about to speak of studying the Holy Book in one portion of it only, and in one line. I make my suggestions in remembrance of the presence of the Lord of the Bible, our Master and our Lord, our Master and our Friend. He, "in the days of His flesh," was the supreme Bible student, the supreme lover, employer, and expositor of the Bible. Look again at the fact as it stands out in the four Gospels. See "this same Jesus" as He upheld Himself and foiled His enemy with the Bible in the Temptation, as He opened His message with it at Nazareth, as He quoted its syllables twice over on the Cross. Walk to Emmaus with Him, and see Him spending the whole Easter afternoon upon the Bible. He had come that morning from the grave, conqueror of death, Lord of life, and He came as it were with the Bible in His hands.

He found around Him in His days on earth a

mass of religious popular opinions. Some of the most intensely popular among them He trampled under His feet. But one of them He noticed only to sanction, sanctify, and glorify. It was the popular opinion that the Bible was divine, the word of God, bearing the authority of God.

As for myself, I pray to my Master and Lord, and I trust Him to hold me now firm to the end, after many a struggle about it, in His opinion of the Holy Scriptures. I wish to enter into the rest and peace of the Bible, as He abode in it. Therefore, I accept the yoke of the Bible, as He accepted it. I wish to feel what He felt, that living incitement to the lifelong study of the Bible, which is bound up vitally with a firm persuasion that the Bible is supernatural. I wish to read it, as it is plain He read it, as being a book *self-sufficient*, in a deep and holy sense ; not, indeed, to the self-sufficient reader, but to the reader who prays in reverence and in simplicity that the Holy Spirit may dispel every moral mist, every hindrance of heart and will, from between Him and the meaning of the written Word ; and who is resolved to obey, to follow, the discovered meaning, in trustful honesty ; and who is taking pains over the Book.

It is good to know how entirely this view of the matter was held by the old primeval Church

writers, the "Fathers." There is simply nothing about which they are more really agreed. Athanasius loves to dwell on the "self-sufficingness" of the "divine Scriptures." Cyril of Jerusalem begs his hearers to test what he says by reading the canonical Scriptures. Chrysostom says that "the cause of all our evils is our not knowing the Scriptures."

Such were the thoughts of the fourth century. We are almost in the twentieth. So more than ever we need to maintain our energy in Bible study by painstaking, prayerful recollection of what the Book is. We need to realise again and again that it is for ever what it was to the old saints, the divinely trustworthy, and therefore authoritative, account of God's mind and will, and above all of His mind and will about the Lord Jesus, and our relations to Him, our pardon for His sake, our life by Him, our peace, and power, and blessed hope in Him. So I lay before my reader a few words about just this aspect of Scripture and Scripture study, and I do so by giving a simple description of a sort of study that has been a great blessing to myself. It is this.

Take one of the Epistles, or a main section of one of them; for this purpose the shorter the better, within reasonable limits. By a little exercise of imagination suppose yourself to be reading



some *newly discovered relic* of the age of the Apostles. A few years ago a learned Greek bishop discovered at Constantinople a small treatise, called the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," and it proved to be a long-lost book of the very early days of Christianity. What microscopic attention that small old pamphlet received, and receives! Every clause has been scrutinised; every allusion to doctrine, life, worship, weighed and discussed. And why? Just because it belongs to the first century, and because it speaks of Christ and Christians, and faith, and life, from the primitive point of view. Now, what I ask you to do is to treat some Holy Letter of the New Testament (which is older still than the "Teaching") in much the same way; very reverently but very simply. Place yourself before it as if it were new. Try, with something of the curiosity you would feel if it *were* new, to gather and arrange its doctrines and its morals. And then remember, over your results, that the book is the Word of God, by which you are to live to-day, and some day to die.

Suppose we turn in this way to the Epistle to the Philippians. It is not long; the golden pages are few. Let us try to lay it before us as what it once was—a *newly given* oracle of God. It *was* once read for the first time, perhaps in the house of

Lydia. Let it be to us in some measure what it was then. And let us remember that it *is* after all new all the while, immortal with the breath of God. It not only "abideth" but "*liveth* for ever."

Here is this primitive document then, this precious "find;" and we are going to investigate it. Let us classify our results under two heads; first, its doctrine of Christ, then its doctrine of the Christian and his life. And we may find a subordinate third heading, its account of the writer's own life as a Christian.

### I. *The Epistle's Account of Christ.*

*a.* We find hints of His *human history*. He was man, in reality and appearance (ii. 7, 8). He died (iii. 10) a death of suffering (iii. 10), the death of the Cross (ii. 8). He rose again, for we read of the power of His resurrection (iii. 10). And He so left this earth that a boundless exaltation followed on His going (ii. 9), so that the heavens are now His abode, from which He is definitely expected to return (iii. 20).

*b.* Going back beyond His human history, we find that, *according to this primitive document*, written well within thirty years of His death, He existed, existed indeed before He became man.

He subsisted in the "form," or manifested glorious reality, of Godhead, equal to God (ii. 6). His becoming man resulted from His own wonderful act of will in that eternal state (ii. 7). He voluntarily took the condition of a servant, a bondservant of God (*ibid.*). He took the "form," the manifested reality, of such a servant. In this service He obeyed; and He carried His obedience "to the extent of death" (ii. 8), a death which accordingly was in Him quite voluntary, part of a free undertaking to be not His own. And it next appears that the immediate result to Himself was an exaltation to supreme majesty as the once humbled and slain One; He was proclaimed as "Lord," in such a sense as to be adored by the universe, to His Father's glory (ii. 11). For God *is* His Father; He is the Son of God (i. 2, ii. 11). Further, all "the riches of God in glory" are "in" Him (iv. 19). Further, in His heavenly glory He is still embodied, for when He returns He will transfigure His followers into likeness to "the body of His glory" (iii. 21). He is Almighty; He can "subdue all things," and subdue them "unto Himself" (*ibid.*).

c. As regards the relation between Him and His followers, it is so close that their whole life is said to be "*in Him.*" He, the supreme Servant, is to

them (we find everywhere) the sovereign Lord. His grace animates them (i. 2, iv. 23). The divine Spirit in them is His (i. 19). Their "fruit of righteousness" is produced "through" Him (i. 11). He is always near them (iv. 5). To suffer for Him is a special boon to them (i. 29). They live in expectation of the Day of His Return (i. 6, 10; ii. 16; iii. 20).

## II. *The Epistle's Account of Christian Life, Inward and Outward.*

Here we find, in our *new-discovered first century document*, that Christians are "saints" (*hagior*), *i.e.*, men *separated* from self and sin to God (i. 1, iv. 21); brothers of one another (i. 14, iv. 21); the true Israel, citizens of the City above (iii. 3, 20: see Rev. Version of 20). So united are they to Christ that they exist "in Him," and are to act in their whole life as "in Him." Thus it is "in Him" that they are saints (i. 1) and brethren (i. 14). In Him they are to stand fast (iv. 1), to be of one mind (iv. 2), to receive one another (ii. 29), to possess comfort (ii. 1), to glory (iii. 3), to rejoice (iii. 1, iv. 4). It is solemnly *promised* (not merely *wished*), under certain most holy and happy conditions, that "the peace of God Himself shall"—

observe this "shall"—"safeguard their hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus" (iv. 7). Wonderful words, but perfectly explicit! In them, meanwhile, God has begun the "good work" which shall be carried on to completion till Christ's Day (i. 6); and God is now "working in them their willing and their doing, for the sake of His good pleasure, His plan and purpose" (ii. 13). And they on their part, in the deep heart-rest of such union and possession, are to "work out their salvation," to live out the life of grace, with the "fear and trembling" of holy reverence (ii. 12). They are "not to look each on his own things, but on the things of others," like their Lord (ii. 4), to hold together in loving, brave union for the Gospel (i. 28), to hold their own in the midst of bad surroundings as the children of God and light-bearers for poor sinful man, letting others know the message of eternal, blessed life (ii. 16). They are to *abstain totally* from all sin, in the power of their life in Christ; to do *nothing* for strife or vain-glory (ii. 3), to be "anxious about *nothing*," but in *everything* to tell their desires to God (iv. 6), to do *all* things without "grudgings and arguings" for self (ii. 14). Take all possible notice of these "*alls*" and "*nothings*" as you search and tabulate; many a Christian life of our time would be transfigured by taking them as they stand.



They are to be unblamable, unhurtful, unblemished, not in a dreamland, but in the hard realities of Philippian life (ii. 13); to bear fruit, "fruit of righteousness which is through Jesus Christ," so that at last, in the day of the Lord, they shall be "filled" with it—every branch loaded (i. 11). They are to let their "moderation," that is, their forgetfulness of self, come out in common life, "known unto all men," in the power of the Lord's presence (iv. 5); to fill their thoughts with all that is good, straightforward, chastened, pure (iv. 8); to "mind" the things in heaven (iii. 20); to have the mind of Christ (ii. 5); to grow in spiritual perception, while growing in love (i. 9); to live a life summed up thus, "worshipping God by His Spirit, exulting in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh" (iii. 3).

### III. *The Epistle's Account of the Writer's Life in Christ.*

Here let us forget that the writer is an Apostle, for he speaks just as a Christian. Well, what as such has he to say about himself? He is one whom Christ has "seized," "grasped" (iii. 12); one who has found in Christ his highest Gain, and highest Object of knowledge, and supreme spiritual power

(iii. 10), and his absorbing interest for life (i. 20, iii. 7-14), and his one possible way of acceptance at the bar of God's holiness. Yes, he must be "found in Him, having the righteousness which is of God on terms of faith" (iii. 9). This man is everywhere and always "in Christ." His "bonds" are "in Christ" (i. 13), his glory is in Christ (i. 26), his thoughts about the incidents of life are in Christ (ii. 19, 24). In Christ he has found out how to do all he has to do, in peace (iv. 13). Christ fills life now (i. 21), and when he dies he will be so with Christ that it will be "far better" than even this present Christ-filled life (i. 23). He is the willing bondservant, slave, of Christ (i. 1). His union with Christ so fills him with the power of peace that very irritating opposition does not irritate him, but gives him occasion for joy (i. 12, &c.); and the suspense about life and death in which he is kept only makes him speak of life and death as rival blessings (i. 21, &c.). Meanwhile every natural feeling of the heart has free play in this supernatural atmosphere (ii. 27, 28; iv. 10). And though "perfect" in respect of union and life in his Lord, he is not yet "perfected" as regards results; the prize is yet to come (iii. 12, 14).

And so you shut the Epistle for the present, leaving much more for another time. The study

has not taken hours; it has only taken interest, purpose, and care. And what shall come of the effort? By the grace of God, sought in humble, holy submission, *this* shall come of it: a realisation in blessed newness and brightness that Christ is yours, that the springs and secrets of this sweet life in Him are yours, yours for to-day, for your actual daily path. You shall go with new thirst, and new expectation, to Him the eternal fountain; "I live, I live—yet not I; and therefore I can work, I can serve, I can bear." It will be with holy "fear and trembling," as in the heavenly Presence, yet also with a peace which passeth understanding, "keeping the heart and thoughts"—a keeping not meant to vanish outside holy times and places, but to do its strongest and brightest work in the midst of crookedness and perverseness, in the stress and under the burthen of your calling, as truly for you now as for the Philippians and their Teacher then.

## V.

By R. F. HORTON, M.A.

I DISTINGUISH two different ways of reading the Bible, one essential for all Christians, the other optional for most of us, though essential for some. I will call these two ways (1) The Devotional, (2) The Critical. For my own part, I keep at my side *two* Bibles. I use the one or the other according as necessity requires me to read in the devotional or the critical way; and I find this method very helpful in marking the difference between the ways and reminding me of the separate use of each.

(1.) The *Devotional*. This is essential for all. We must feed on the Word. Read it on your knees. Let the atmosphere of the Spirit surround it and you. Ponder as you read. Turn up all the references, and bring the passages together. Who does not know the kind of Heavenly Illumination which soon begins to play upon the page, the gentle dew which soon begins to fall on the spirit, as verse after verse is set in the light of the soul's

need and bathed in the rays of the Sun of Righteousness! When you are reading in this way keep praying—turn your eye from the Book to God, from God back to the Book. Realise that it is His way of conversing with you. When you are reading in this way, do not stop at the difficulties; go by them. It is of no use to stop in your approach to God because you see a boulder in the way, or because a swollen brook crosses the path. Press on; let the boulder alone; look a moment and you will see stepping-stones across the brook. I should say for this purpose of devotion read first and foremost and most constantly,—and in *this* order,—the Gospels—the Epistles to Colossians and to Hebrews—the Psalms—the Book of Isaiah—and the Book of Deuteronomy—dipping into the other books as your marginal references tell you. These nine books are the high ridges of the Bible Land, and the spurs can be conveniently traced from them on this side and on that.

(2.) *The Critical.* The Bible is a literature, or two literatures in one. It can be understood on its literary side only by examining it in literary ways. Its use as a devotional book is not materially affected by the results of our critical researches; but when we need to derive from it truths in a scientific form and doctrines in a theological system,



immediately the critical study of the books of which the Bible is composed becomes of vast importance. It is everything to know the correct readings, the precise grammatical meaning of the text, and above all the dates and the manner of composition of the several parts. Whether this can be done with advantage by any but trained students is a question. It certainly should be done, however, to some extent by all who attempt to teach; for to teach the Scriptures in ignorance of critical methods, and in defiance of all the results of criticism, is to lay your pupils or scholars open to the unresisted assaults of a criticism which comes not from those who love the Bible, but from those who hate it.

Such a work as Eyre and Spottiswoode's *Variorum Bible* puts the more important lines of the critical apparatus into the hands of every student. The English reader may in this way estimate approximately the difficulties which arise from different readings or uncertainties of text. And to some limited extent, by the help of the Aids which are given at the end, he may consider the question of date and authorship in studying each book.

For this critical reading of the Bible several general suggestions may be given. *First*—Take each book by itself, and try to realise when it was

written, and the particular place which it occupies in the Spiritual Development of man. *Second*—Read the books of the Bible through, not in the order which they occupy in our English Bible, but in the chronological order otherwise determined. *Third*—Examine very carefully all parallel narratives or passages which occur with only slight variations in different books. *Fourth*—Study closely the quotations of the Old Testament in the New, and consider what light these quotations throw on the Scriptures which New Testament writers had before them, and their methods of using those Scriptures.

If my readers will faithfully carry out these suggestions for a few months—not allowing their critical studies to interfere with their devotional use of the Bible—they will, if I am not mistaken, find their Bible springing into a new life before their eyes, and laden with innumerable unsuspected interests. It is possible that certain prepossessions about it may be altered, but it is unquestionable that their new way of regarding it will be as much more reverent as it is more intelligent than the old.

## VI.

By **REV. CHARLES A. BERRY.**

IT may be said that all intelligent and reverent reading of the Bible is so far a study of that Book of books. Indeed, before this new age ushered in its flowing tide of cheap primers and popular commentaries, when learning had not as yet caught the democratic spirit and consecrated its resources to the enrichment of the people, no other way to the mastery of the Scriptures lay open to the multitude save the meditative and pious perusal of the ancient page. Nor were the results then achieved by our unlettered fathers such as to be scornfully or pitifully passed over and carelessly forgotten. One thing is quite clear to the fair-minded observer, that with all their disadvantages in the matter of scholarship these men acquired an acquaintance with the Bible, an insight into its supreme truths, a mastery of its principles and lessons, such as made them a race of instructed, stalwart, earnest Christians. This kind of Bible-study was almost, if not quite, innocent

of all such literary and critical questions as those of date, style, authorship, canonicity, and such like ; but it was, on the other hand, much more than the regular and devout reading of the Word for purposes of piety and praise. It was the study of the Book in the light which it cast upon itself, a study to which were brought methodical habit, patient investigation, sanctified common sense, and a mind prepared by prayer for frank and open impression ; and the result of such study was a marvellous mastery of the Divine truths contained in the Scriptures. It was, in a word, an investigation into the *message* rather than into the *machinery* of revelation, and although the pursuit was almost necessarily accompanied by erroneous theories as to the origin and character of the several Scripture books, yet it did not thereby wholly miss the essential truths which the books contain. And for my part, much as I prize our wider and more exact knowledge of the Bible make-up, I should count it a poor advantage were we ever to substitute mere literary and critical appreciation for this profound and sustaining knowledge of the Scripture message. To grasp the revelation is more and better than to investigate the style of the writing. To catch and to be elevated by the inspiration is of greater worth than to master the several strata through which its channel is cut.

And although, happily, there is no necessary antagonism between the criticism of the documents and the reverent acquirement of the truth revealed, yet there is necessity to emphasise the caution that amid all our new studies of Bible-mechanism we require to give supreme attention to the study of Bible-contents, and while not resting in the mere devotional reading of "portions" on one hand, or in the critical inquiry into dates and origins on the other, to secure a mastery of the spiritual message which glows and grows from the first book to the last.

With this prefatory counsel duly accentuated I am free to confess both the necessity and the pleasure of a more critical study of the Bible. Of course, such a pursuit, to be adequately carried out, demands the resources of the specialist and the devotion of a lifetime. But one man may sow and another reap, and what is achieved by the specialist may be collected and conserved by ordinary intelligence. Fortunately learning no longer dwells apart in proud seclusion, and books are in the main reachable by the poor as well as the rich. One of the most marked and promising signs of our times is the zeal with which men of exceptional scholarship are scattering their precious pearls of labour among the people. And nowhere is this splendid service so marked as



in the field of Biblical exposition, so that earnest students may now gather a wealth of knowledge as to the history, authorship, and meaning of the Scripture books. They, therefore, who would be masters of the Book as well as of its clear spiritual contents, who would enlarge their perception of its beauties by an acquaintance with its history, need suffer no delay through lack of adequate guides and instruments. Eyre and Spottiswoode's *Variorum Bible* and the *Cambridge Bible for Colleges and Schools* have been recommended by many writers. An equal recommendation may be given to the "*Comprehensive Teachers' Bible*," published by Bagster, which contains more useful information and suggestion in small compass than most books of the kind. To those who are engaged, or are about to start, in this pursuit, let me offer the following brief suggestions:—

I.—As to method. Begin by securing a general acquaintance with the chronological order of the books. Absolute precision is impossible in this matter, as controversy still wages over the date of certain books, and even over the date of different sections of the same book. It is possible, however, to attain a working and approximate chronology of a great part of Scripture. It is important to do this. The present order of the books is a convenient classification of subjects, but it leads to

some confusion and misapprehension. Only as the order of date is secured can the student intelligently trace the sequence and growth of revelation. A good history of the books will help the reader at once to see new meanings in certain sections by placing them in their true historic setting.

It is equally important that, as the next step, one book should be studied at a time, and so studied as to centre itself afresh amid the problems and events which occasioned its appearance. It ought never to be forgotten that most of the books of the Bible—notably the prophets and the epistles—were written to meet existing moods of thoughts or combinations of events, and that, to understand the eternal truths enunciated, it is necessary to know the temporal occasion of their utterance. No one, for instance, can enter into the splendid reasoning and the rich conclusions of the Epistle to the Colossians unless he has acquaintance with the schools of thought which had arisen within the Churches of the Lycus. The prophecies of Isaiah, again, are largely a sealed mystery to men who know nothing of Isaiah's contemporary history. Bishop Lightfoot, in respect of the former, and a priceless volume on Isaiah by Rev. G. A. Smith in respect of the latter, have made these respective books more new and more interesting than the last

novel of the season. Study, therefore, one book at a time. Read it through at one sitting. Go forward then to a critical mastery of its occasioning circumstance, and it will prove a treasure-house of unexpected riches.

Another, though a subsequent, step is to trace the development in Scripture of one great idea, *e.g.*, the Messianic Promise, the Kingdom of God, the Idea of the Church, the Person of Christ. It is clear, however, that one cannot wisely enter upon this department of study until progress has been made along the lines previously suggested. But when the time arrives for it, few branches of study will be found to yield more solid results.

II.—As to object. On this point I have little to add after my opening paragraphs. Let me point out in a word, that to enter upon the study of the books for any avowed purpose beyond that of frankly mastering their contents will be to miss the real message and value which lie in them. To study for the sake of finding flaws, or to study with a view to supporting some preconceived theory of inspiration, will be to vitiate the whole pursuit. Let the Bible speak for itself. Make it your business to get at what is in it, and at *all* that is in it. You will find as the result, that though some of your theories may be knocked out

of shape, you have a new and stronger assurance of the presence of God's Spirit in the writings of the "holy men."

III.—As to spirit. Let your study of the Bible be prosecuted with a happy blending of awakened reason and of devout reverence. It is as true of the scholarly and critical as it is of the ordinary reading of the Scriptures that only to the well-balanced man will the record reveal itself. To a blind and mistaken reverence, properly called superstition, the Bible shows none of its vast wealth of rationalism. To a hard and loveless heart it brings forth none of its spiritual beauties. Haydon painted a picture of Christ's entry into Jerusalem on the ass. It hangs to-day in the Catholic Cathedral in Cincinnati. Into it he introduced two figures in addition to the main subject—Wordsworth and Voltaire—the one bending in reverence, the other tossing his head in scorn. The peculiarity of the picture is that, whether intended or not, the reverential figure bends so low, and the scornful figure poses itself so loftily, that neither can see the object of their respective emotions. It was to me a parable of how two opposite classes of men miss the gracious wealth of the Scriptures. Beware of that mock-reverence which hides God's Word by denying the right of reason to investigate and to

inquire. But beware equally of that self-confident and irreverent rationalism which is not lowly enough to see God's treasures before its eyes. There is a one-eyed scepticism as well as a one-eyed faith. God gave us two eyes. Open them both, my friends: you will see more and better.

I would like to close by urging the joy of Bible-study. George Macdonald once said he found some compensation in the prospect of old age in the thought that amid its quiet he might get time to burrow into his Shakespeare. Shakespeare to him kept meaning more and more. The earnest student of the Bible is not long in feeling a similar enthusiasm. The story of the Western editor who found a Bible on his desk and reviewed it as a new book is just a farcical exaggeration of the fact that the Bible *is* a new book to the man who begins to study it. And the mind that trains itself to the pursuit will not fail of inexhaustible reward.



## VII.

BY REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A.

THIS is a remarkable time for the circulation of helps for the understanding of the Bible. Most of us use Bibles swollen beyond their normal size by a large addition of explanatory and critical notes. We learn the map of Palestine almost as well as that of Great Britain, and have a very fair conception of climate, soil, customs, habits, political organisation, contemporary history, and the cast of thought. All this is good, excellently good; but there is a corresponding danger against which we need to be on our guard, and which gives several signs of its subtle but deleterious influence.

We are liable to place excessive reliance on these external aids. Our tables are strewn with maps and commentaries. No pains are spared to arrive at the correct rendering of a word or the true interpretation of the passage we may be studying; and when we have satisfied ourselves we are apt to suppose that we understand all perfectly, and are

at liberty to pass on to something else ; whereas, in point of fact, we have only cleared the ground and taken the most elementary steps towards the true end of all Bible study. We have done no more than adjust our telescopes ; we have yet to gaze through them at the distant wonders and glories of the heavens. What sane man would suppose that he had exhausted the wealth of beauty and life of the tropics just because he had read through Kingsley's " At Last " and Drummond's " Africa," and had mastered the scientific names of flowers and palms so as to be able to classify them correctly with their kinds ?

We are sometimes more than half inclined to curtail our Bible-study if we happen to be away for a holiday and in some way separated from our usual appliances, and are shut up to the use of a cheap copy of God's Word, without references or notes, or any critical apparatus. And is there not a disposition to turn aside from commentary or teaching which deals exclusively with the spiritual aspects of Scripture with a feeling that there is not much to learn from any who are not thoroughly familiarised with the latest results of scientific and advanced criticism ?

There is a profound mistake in all this. It is a good thing run to seed. Of course, we cannot be

too careful to ascertain the exact form in which holy men spake of old, and sometimes great light is thrown on a passage by acquaintance with the exact conditions of time and place and circumstance under which it was written. But we may attach too much importance to these things. We may be acquainted with all such facts and yet miss the deep spiritual lessons which lie beneath, as the kernel in the shell. And some shepherd on the Scotch hills, who has had none of our advantages, may be drawing supplies from the depths of Scripture for his inner life which have never even suggested themselves to our hearts. In fact, we need something more than mental or intellectual acumen. This is but the machinery which works the bucket from the well-head, and which may be more or less elaborate, but the bucket is something entirely and for ever distinct.

After all, does it very much help us in the battle against sin and self, or does it afford very much strength to our inner life, to know that certain Psalms were written long after the days of David, or that the religious leaders of the Jews were broken up into four principal parties in the time of Christ? We may know all such facts and yet miss the only bread of devout souls; whilst others may be nourished on it and grow into the perfect

stature of Christian manhood who would fail miserably in a critical examination.

The obvious moral is, not that we should relax our acquaintance with the botany, zoology, allusions and contemporary history of Scripture, but that we should never be content until we have passed through these outer courts and knelt in worship and adoration in that inner shrine, where the shew-bread awaits us, and the sword of Goliath is hidden, and the light of the Shechinah glows.

It should never be forgotten that our gains from Bible-study will be in direct proportion to the condition of our spiritual life. A man may be able to parse and scan and analyse the roll of sentences in Milton's "Epics" or admire the literary beauty of Wordsworth's lays, but if he is destitute of the spirit of poetry they will fail in their deepest ministry to his soul. It does not always follow that a geologist or botanist, intent on their special pursuits, will get as much from an afternoon's climb among the mountains as will some unsophisticated soul whose nature is attuned to Beauty, Simplicity, Purity, Truth, and God. A man may be a clever critic and yet miss the mystery of beauty, which defies analysis and floats as a sweet perfume on the air—an undefinable and spiritual essence. So if we come to the Bible merely as a literary produc-

tion, and without adjusting the temper of our minds—if we are selfish and worldly, unforgiving and proud—we shall be as blind men who, with binocular in hand, stand unmoved before the landscape which lies outspread beneath the summer sun to the shores of the distant, gleaming sea. There are things in the Scriptures, and elsewhere, which are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed to babes; for so it has seemed good to the Father. The pure in heart are they who see. The poor in spirit possess the Kingdom.

It is of great consequence, then, that we carefully adjust our spiritual temper before we approach the study of our Bibles. It need not take long. But there should be a reverent bowing down of the soul on the threshold of the temple of Scripture; a putting off of the shoes from our feet—a realisation that the place where the Divine Glory trembles is most holy ground; a cleansing ourselves of all filthiness of the flesh and spirit; a deep and hallowed consciousness of the presence of God; a simple, childlike, humble, and obedient spirit, which listens with hushed awe, as the child Samuel in the sanctuary of old, for the accents of the voice of God. “Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.”

Souls which love deeply best understand love. Pure eyes carry with them the flames of fire by



which they see. Spirit recognises and reads Spirit. Those who have suffered have most sympathy with the inarticulated wants and thoughts of sufferers. So those who are most devout will be best able to understand the inner life and the spiritual conflict, the fears and hopes, the yearnings of desire, the pæans of triumph, and the wailings of disappointed hope which fill the pages of Scripture with their various and abundant expression. As the landscape expands before the view of the mountain-climber, so does Scripture open up and unfold in precise proportion to our elevation in spirituality of character and our fellowship with God. If you would see, climb. If you would learn of grace, grow in grace. If you would know, be.

Perhaps obedience is one of the best methods of spiritual acquisition. If each reader of the Scripture would determine to put into practice each new precept and command which may start up in his morning reading, as a cover of partridges before the steps of the sportsman, perhaps noting them on paper as he proceeds for future self-examination and reference, but pledged to carry into practical effect each crossing of the *t* and dotting of the *i* which is demanded by the voice of God, there would be an immense accession of spiritual insight. The accumulation of neglected commands

has gathered over our eyes as scales. Habitual disregard of God's will has induced a sense of unreality and vagueness to the whole tenor of His revelation. Mists born out of the morasses of our disobedience and neglect obscure our vision. We have not made use of what we had, and we have come into great danger of losing even that. And nothing would bring back more speedily freshness and enjoyment, and spiritual apprehension of God's Word, than the soul's pledge to itself to adopt the words of the Israelites and say, "All that the Lord hath spoken, we will do." The Lord Himself has given the one indispensable canon of spiritual knowledge, in saying, "If any man will do His will, he shall know."

But, after all, these spiritual conditions are beyond our reach unless we are helped and taught by the Holy Spirit. We should never open the Bible without first lifting up our hearts to Him in heartfelt ejaculatory prayer that He would induce within us that holy and receptive frame of mind which shall be as the softening of the clods of the earth for the reception of the precious seed. Ask Him to do as the photographer does to his paper when he prepares it and makes it sensitive to the touch of the light.

And thus we are brought to our final word. That study of the Bible is an egregious mistake, certain

to result in disappointment, which does not depend on the gracious teaching and help of Him to whose inspiration on the hearts and minds of holy men the sacred volume is due. He who first inspired can best teach the meaning of His own words. Authors are not always at hand to explain the obscure and difficult passages of their own books; but the Author of Scripture stands beside the meanest and most ignorant of His students, ready to lead them into all the truth. Lift up your hearts to Him, seeking the Divine illumination and quickening. Beneath His touch rocks will yield water; pages that seemed blank will suddenly be full of meaning, as letters written in sympathetic ink turn black when placed before the fire; a garden will bloom where all had seemed dry and uninteresting; while tracks of barren territory will be found to cover the most precious ore.

And He will do His work, not so much in the intellect, but in the heart. The eyes of your *heart* will be enlightened, and you will know. The deep things of God, which are only searched and known by the Spirit of God, are revealed to those who have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God. It is when love abounds more and more that we distinguish things that differ. It is when we are spiritually-minded that we judge

all things, though we ourselves are judged of no man. “Oh, Holy Spirit of Inspiration, who art also the Source and Fountain of Illumination, open our eyes that we may behold wondrous things out of Thy law, and that we may ever live in that sympathy with Scripture which is begotten by Thine abiding influence on the inner man.

## VIII.

Br REV. W. J. DAWSON.

THE first great need in the study of the Bible appears to me to be *common sense*. We have to recollect that the Bible is not so much a book as a series of books ; not so much an inspired book as a record of inspiration. We have in the historical books of the Old Testament a statement of the working of God in history ; but it does not follow that all the base and selfish acts of Jewish rulers were the human expression of the working of God's Spirit in men. Take, for instance, the story of Jael and Sisera, and the awful passion of triumphant vengeance which breathes in Deborah's song. Because Deborah, in the lyric passion of the hour, in the tremendous tumult of emotion caused by the deliverance of Israel, pronounced Jael to be blessed among women, the older commentators have thought it necessary to justify the perfidy of Jael and endorse the encomium which Deborah passed upon her. Now, these commentators were, no doubt, most



amiable and excellent men, who would have turned sick at the very sight of blood; but because, in an excess of passionate patriotism, Deborah called a woman who had been guilty of the blackest treachery and murder "blessed among women," these writers feel bound to justify her, and have tried to do so. This may be taken as an example of the pedantic and casuistic method of studying Scripture, as opposed to the common-sense method. Secularist writers have seized on such follies in religious writers with avidity, and have not been scrupulous in pressing home their advantage. Nor can we blame them. Perfidy is perfidy, and murder is murder, for whatever end it may be wrought, whatever national service it may secure, in whatever land or age it may occur. To suppose that the God who said "Thou shalt do no murder" approved the act of Jael, is to accuse God of complicity in her crime. To justify it because it secured deliverance for Israel is to defend the most immoral of all axioms—the wisdom of doing evil that good may come. This is a sample of the peril to which a casuistical reading of the Old Testament has exposed the Church. What we have to do in such matters is simply to use the power of judgment which God has given us on the Book of Judges as we should upon any other

ancient record. We have to study it in relation to the period and people; we have to learn what we can of how it was written, and why; we have to bring to it an unbiassed critical discernment; and, above all, we have to correct its spirit and morals by the spirit and morality of Jesus Christ. When we do this, the difficulties which sceptical writers make so much of vanish into thin air. We use our common sense about such a story as the murder of Sisera, and we see in the whole history, not something which we are bound to defend as essential to the existence of revelation, but simply a chapter in the spiritual evolution of the human race. Spiritual barbarism necessarily precedes spiritual culture. Such narratives have value to us to-day, not because of the spirit which inspires them, and which is utterly rebuked by the teaching of Jesus, but simply as records in the development of the world out of barbarism into Christianity.

A necessary corollary of this position occurs in the public and household reading of Scripture. There are certain portions of Scripture which should never be read in public or before children. We honour God and do not dishonour the Bible in omitting them. The compilers of lectionaries really seem to have abnegated all right of private judgment in the methods on which they have

arranged the Scriptures for public reading. There are heads of households, also, who read the Bible right through at family prayers, and would think they did wrong by omitting certain chapters which they cannot but feel to be offensive to all moral sense and delicacy of feeling. These errors distinctly spring from ignorance of what the Bible is. Such persons forget that the Bible is many books and not one; that the various books differ widely in their value and significance, and that there is no obligation laid upon the most devout lover of the Word to treat all the books with the same regard and use them for the same purpose. In other words, they do not apply their common sense to the Bible.

When we turn from the historic books of the Old Testament to the Gospels and Epistles other qualities become needful, and the first of these is simplicity of mind. The great hindrance to a proper understanding of the Gospels is, that we approach them with all sorts of preconceptions, misconceptions, and mental reservations. The all but infinite human accretions which cluster round the Divine words of Jesus obscure their meaning and diminish their force. It is rarely that the full force of the words of Jesus is permitted to stream in upon the mind, and the reason is that we do

not approach the Gospels with a free and eager intelligence. We are like men who look at the sun through coloured glass: the pure light of the teaching of Christ is always being modified and spoiled by our prejudiced discernment of it. Tolstoi, in his singular confessions of faith, has shown how easy it is for a man of great genius and profound religious feeling for many years to entirely misinterpret the teaching of Christ, and that precisely because he had not read the Gospels with a free intelligence. In other words, Tolstoi, in his earlier life, did what most of us are apt to do, accepted the traditional interpretation of Christ's words as the real interpretation, and so wholly missed their vital meaning, and never received into his soul the full shock of their sublime illumination. And Jesus foresaw all this when He said that we must become as little children if we would enter His kingdom. I do not, of course, mean that we are not to take the utmost pains to discover what Jesus Christ really did say. We should be fools indeed if we did not avail ourselves of the great toil of critical learning which has endeavoured to ascertain the exact words of Christ, and to clear away the technical obscurities which have encumbered the sacred text. But what I do mean is, that, having done our best to know what

Jesus really did say, we have then to receive His words in their plain, simple, obvious meaning. And in order to do this we shall often have to disregard entirely the traditional interpretation which the Church has put upon them. The mass of Christians have never done this; if they had the history of the world would have been very different; if they would, the kingdom of Christ would soon come.

And, personally, I may add that I have never got any real good out of commentaries. I have always found that commentators are profuse in their explanations of the obvious, and dumb before the real difficulties of the Bible. They are verbose when I want them to say nothing, and reticent when I am in most need of their counsel; or, as one of the ripest Biblical scholars of our time has often put it in his class-room—

“The commentators each dark passage shun,  
And hold their farthing candle to the sun.”

I have found, therefore, that I can understand the Gospels best without their aid. I gladly avail myself of their scholarship that I may get a clear critical knowledge of the text, but when they begin to expound I leave them. The words of Jesus are so much of the nature of a personal



message to the individual soul that the less we have of any human mediator between our souls and His the better for our understanding of His meaning. In this respect, simplicity is only another form of common sense applied to Bible-reading. Read the Gospels with the simple unperturbed intelligence of the little child—with the common-sense attitude of mind which we should apply to any other book, and they will yield up their meaning to you. The only real difficulty in understanding the Gospels and most portions of the Bible is that we treat them in an unreal spirit; we apply to them a method of interpretation which we should never dream of applying to any other books.

It will be a great help also, I think, to recollect what has already been said on the different degrees of significance and importance which attach to the different books of the Bible. The range of value is very wide. The words of Jude, for instance, are of much less importance than the words of Jesus. The acts of Jesus Christ are the acts of a great Example; but it by no means follows that the acts of the apostles fix the same rule of conduct and are of the same binding significance. Many portions of the Pauline Epistles were designed to have a purely temporary use, and that use has long since passed away. Just as the division of the Bible into

chapters and texts often mutilates the meaning of a passage, so the congregating together in one volume of many writings of widely-varying value has tended to confuse the reader as to the relative importance of the various books. It is here again the Church which is at fault in insisting, not only upon a verbal, but something like an equal inspiration for the writings of the Canon. It is almost a wonder that no one has yet ventured to include in the catholicity of his reverence the address to James I. which prefaces the Authorised Version.

Finally, I would say that there are two other qualities absolutely necessary to the true understanding of the deepest things of the Word of God—*attention* and *spirituality*. How many times Christ said, "He that hath ears let him hear!" We have to wait upon God and *listen* if we would catch the deep inward music, the solemn breathing of the Divinest thoughts which are our heritage in the Word of God. Men do not read the Bible with the same habit of consecutive attention that they would give to any other book. They pick a chapter here, a chapter there; they do not read a Gospel or Epistle right through at a sitting, and endeavour to master its line of thought or receive its full impression. They do not even give a single passage anything like the same patient study which they

would cheerfully devote to a sentence of Plato or Herodotus. This is why pulpit exposition is so necessary: all men have Bibles, but few read them; and to atone for their neglect, and also as an easier thing for themselves, upon the whole they prefer to pay other men to read the Bible for them and tell them what it means. And what we need is the habit of attention: the listening ear that strains itself upward in the stillness of the spirit to catch the mystic whispers of the Holy Spirit, whose work it is to take of the things that are Christ's and reveal them unto us. There is a story told of a young preacher who went to an old one and complained that he could find nothing to preach from; he had seemed to have exhausted the Bible! The old preacher simply replied, "Sink your shaft deeper, and you'll come to the water!" The Bible is so rich that the merest superficial study of it will yield us great reward; but the eternal springs lie deep, and we cannot get at them without patience. Nor can we really understand the Bible without spirituality of mind. The things of God are spiritually discerned. He who lives in the habitual contemplation of God—who lives as seeing that which is invisible—will find every chapter of the Bible an open window through which he looks into the eternal world. To him the Bible will be self-revealing.

The voices which speak in the chambers of eternity will always echo in his heart. The higher and nobler intricacies of thought which abound in the Pauline Epistles will, to him, become clear and intelligible, because his own spirit will interpret them, and the Spirit of God will help his infirmities. Piety is the great commentator; devoutness of spirit is the true parent of insight and the great interpreter. It is the saintly men who have best understood the Bible, for where all human genius and scholarship fail, spirituality presses forward, and discerns the deep things, and the dark things too, of God. And that again is precisely the declaration of Jesus, when He said that the pure in heart shall see God, and that he who did the will of God should understand the doctrine. It is, indeed, the entire reversal of every human axiom and precedent. But there it is; we are not to know first and be afterwards; we are to *be* first, and then shall we know. Let us *be* what Christ wants us to be, and our difficulties with the Bible will all disappear, and disappear for ever.

## THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE.

BY PROF. HENRY DRUMMOND, F. R. S. E.

I WILL give a note or two, pretty much by way of refreshing the memory about the Bible and how to look at it.

First: *The Bible came out of religion, not religion out of the Bible.* The Bible is a product of religion, not a cause of it. The war literature of America which culminated, I suppose, in the publication of President Grant's life, came out of the war; the war did not come out of the literature. And so in the distant past, there flowed among the nations of heathendom a small, warm stream, like the Gulf Stream in the cold Atlantic—a small stream of religion; and now and then at intervals, men, carried along by this stream, uttered themselves in words. The historical books came out of facts; the devotional books came out of experiences; the letters came out of circumstances; and the Gospels came out of all three. That is where the Bible came from. It came out of religion; religion did not come out of the Bible. You



see the difference. The religion is not, then, in the writing alone; but in those facts, experiences, circumstances, in the history and development of a people led and taught by God. And it is not the words that are inspired, so much as the men.

Secondly: *These men were authors; they were not pens.* Their individuality comes out on every page they wrote. They were different in mental and literary style; in insight; and even the same writer differs at different times. II. Thessalonians, for example, is considerably beneath the level of Romans, and III. John is beneath the level of I. John. A man is not always at his best. These writers did not know they were writing a Bible.

Third: *The Bible is not a book; it is a library.* It consists of sixty-six books. It is a great convenience, but in some respects a great misfortune, that these books have always been bound up together and given out as one book to the world, when they are not; because that has led to endless mistakes in theology and in practical life.

Fourth: These books, which make up this library, written at intervals of hundreds of years, were collected after the last of the writers was dead—long after—by human hands. Where were the books? Take the New Testament. There were four lives of Christ. One was in Rome; one was in Southern

Italy; one was in Palestine; one in Asia Minor. There were twenty-one letters. Five were in Greece and Macedonia; five in Asia; one in Rome. The rest were in the pockets of private individuals. Theophilus had Acts. They were collected undesignedly. For example, the letter to the Galatians was written to the Church in Galatia. Somebody would make a copy or two, and put it into the hands of the members of the different churches, and they would find their way not only to the churches in Galatia, but after an interval to nearly all the churches. In those days the Christians scattered up and down through the world, exchanged copies of those letters, very much as geologists up and down the world exchange specimens of minerals at the present time, or entomologists exchange specimens of butterflies. And after a long time a number of the books began to be pretty well known. In the third century the New Testament consisted of the following books: The four Gospels, Acts, thirteen letters of Paul, 1st John, 1st Peter; and in addition, the Epistles of Barnabas and Hermas. This was not called the New Testament, but the Christian Library. Then these last books were discarded. They ceased to be regarded as upon the same level as the others. In the fourth century the canon was closed—that is to say, a list was made up of the books which were to be regarded

as canonical. And then long after that they were stitched together and made up into one book—hundreds of years after that. Who made up the complete list? It was never formally made up. The bishops of the different churches would draw up a list each of the books that they thought ought to be put into this Testament. The churches also would give their opinion. Sometimes councils would meet and talk it over—discuss it. Scholars like Jerome would investigate the authenticity of the different documents, and there came to be a general consensus of the churches on the matter. But no formal closing of the canon was ever attempted.

And lastly: All religions have their sacred books, just as the Christians have theirs. Why is it necessary to remind ourselves of that? If you ask a man why he believes such and such a thing, he will tell you, because it is in the Bible. If you ask him, "How do you know the Bible is true?" he will probably reply, "Because it says so." Now, let that man remember that the sacred books of all the other religions make the same claim; and while it is quite enough among ourselves to talk about a thing being true because it is in the Bible, we come in contact with outsiders, and have to meet the skepticism of the day. We must go far deeper than that. The religious books of the other religions claim to be far

more Divine in their origin than do ours. For example, the Mohammedans claim for the Koran—a large section of them, at least—that it was uncreated, and that it lay before the throne of God from the beginning of time. They claim it was put into the hands of the angel Gabriel, who brought it down to Mahomet, and dictated it to him, and allowed him at long intervals to have a look at the original book itself—bound with silk and studded with precious stones. That is a claim of much higher Divinity than we claim for our book; and if we simply have to rely upon the Bible's testimony to its own verity, it is for the same reason the Mohammedan would have you believe his book, and the Hindu would have you put your trust in the Védas. That is why thorough Bible study is of such importance. We can get to the bottom of truth in itself, and be able to give a reason for the faith that is in us.

Now may I give you before I stop, just a couple of examples of how the Bible came out of religion, and not religion out of the Bible. Take one of the letters. Just see how it came out of the circumstances of the time. The first of the letters that was written will do very well as an example. It is the 1st Epistle to the Thessalonians. In the year 52 Paul went to Europe. He spent three Sundays in Thessalonica, created a great disturbance by his preaching, and a

riot sprang up, and his life was in danger. He was smuggled out of the city at night—not, however, before having founded a small church. He was unable to go back to Thessalonica, although he tried it two or three times; but he wrote a letter. That is the first letter to the Thessalonians. You see how it sprang out of the circumstances of the time. Take a second example. Let us take one of the lives of Christ. Suppose you take the life recorded by Mark. Now, from internal evidences you can make out quite clearly how it was written, by whom it was written, and to whom it was written. You understand at once it was written to a Roman public. If I were writing a letter to a red Indian I would make it very different from a letter I would write to a European. Now, Mark puts in a number of points which he would not if he had been writing to Greeks. For example, Mark almost never quotes prophecy. The Romans did not know anything about prophecy. Then, he gives little explanations of Jewish customs. When I was writing home I had to give some little explanations of American customs—for example, Commencement Day. When Mark writes to Rome about things happening farther East, he gives elaborate explanations. Again, Mark is fond of Latin words—writing to the Latins, who could understand them. He talks about “centurion,” “prætorium,” and others. Then,



he always turns Jewish money into Roman money, just as I should say a book, if I were writing to Europe about it, costs two shillings, instead of fifty cents. Mark, for example, says, "two mites, which make a codrantes." He refers to the coins which the Romans knew. In these ways we find out that the Bible came out of the circumstances and the places and the times in which it was written. Then if we will we can learn where Mark got his information, to a large extent. It is an extremely interesting study. I should like to refer you to Godet's "New Testament Studies," where you will get this worked out. Let me just indicate to you how these sources of information are arrived at—the principal sources of information. There are a number of graphic touches in the book which indicate an eye-witness. Mark himself could not have been the eye-witness; and yet there are a number of graphic touches which show that he got his account from an eye-witness. You will find them, for example, in Mark iv. 38; x. 50; vi. 31; vii. 34. You will find also graphic touches indicating an ear-witness—as if the voice lingered in the mind of the writer. For example, the retention of Aramaic in v. 41; and in vii. 34—" *Talitha cumi*; Damsel, I say unto thee, arise." He retained the Aramaic words Christ said, as I would say in Scotland, "My wee lassie, rise up." The very words

lingered in his ear, and he put them in in the original. Then there are occasional phrases indicating the moral impression produced—v. 15; x. 24; x. 32. Now, Mark himself was not either the eye-witness or ear-witness. There is internal evidence that he got his information from Peter. We know very well that Mark was an intimate friend of Peter's. When Peter came to Mark's house in Jerusalem, after he got out of prison, the very servant knew his voice, so that he must have been well known in the house. Therefore he was a friend of Mark's. The coloring and notes seem to be derived from Peter. There is a sense of wonder and admiration which you find all through the book, very like Peter's way of looking at things—i. 27; i. 33; i. 45; ii. 12; v. 42; and a great many others. But, still more interesting, Mark quotes the words, "Get thee behind Me, Satan," which were said to Peter's shame, but he omits the preceding words said to his honor. "Thou art Peter. On this rock," and so on. Peter had learned to be humble when he was telling Mark about it. Compare Mark viii. 27-33, with Matthew's account—xvi. 13-23. Mark also omits the fine achievement of Peter—walking on the lake. When Peter was talking to Mark he never said anything about it. Compare vi. 50 with Matthew's account—xiv. 28. And Mark alone records the two warnings given to Peter by the two cock-

crowings, making his fall the more inexcusable. See Mark xiv. 30; also the 68th verse and the 72d. Peter did not write the book; we know that, because Peter's style is entirely different. None of the four Gospels have the names of the writers attached to them. We have had to find all these things out; but Mark's Gospel is obviously made up of notes from Peter's evangelistic addresses.

So we see from these simple examples how human a book the Bible is, and how the Divinity in it has worked through human means. The Bible, in fact, has come out of religion; not religion out of the Bible.

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